CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:

receiving a request to select one of a plurality of available system elements to be installed;

receiving an identification of a first system element which is not of the plurality of available system elements;

installing the first system element;

deinstalling the first system element; and

installing the one of the plurality of available system elements.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein:

the identification of the first system element comprises an indication of a location of the first system element.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein:

the identification of the first system element comprises an indication of a filename of the first system element.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein:

the plurality of system elements comprise a plurality of device drivers; and

the first system element comprises a first device driver having substantially different functionality than the plurality of device drivers.

5. The method of claim 4 wherein:

the first device driver comprises a do-nothing driver.

6. A method of installing a device driver for a newly-installed hardware device in a system, the method comprising:

installing a first device driver;

deinstalling the first device driver; and

5   installing an operative device driver which enables the hardware device and the system to

6   operate together.

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1   7.   The method of claim 6 wherein the first device driver does not enable the hardware device

2   and the system to operate together.

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1   8.   The method of claim 6 further comprising, prior to installing the first device driver:

2   receiving a request from an operating system of the system to identify the operative device

3   driver from among a plurality of possible device drivers.

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1   9.   A method of installing a device driver for a hardware device in a computer having an

2   operating system and executing under control of a user, the method comprising:

3   providing a plurality of drivers, any of which may become installed as the device driver;

4   providing a common driver which may not become installed as the device driver;

5   the operating system requesting that the user identify the device driver;

6   receiving from the user an identification of the common driver as the device driver;

7   installing the common driver;

8   receiving from the user an identification of an operating system interface through which the

9   hardware device should communicate with the operating system;

10   deinstalling the common driver; and

11   installing one of the plurality of drivers as the device driver, in accordance with the

12   identification of the operating system interface.

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1   10.   The method of claim 9 wherein the hardware device comprises a communication device.

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1   11.   The method of claim 10 wherein the hardware device comprises a DSL card.

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1   12.   The method of claim 11 wherein the operating system interface is selected from a group

2   comprising at least an NDISWAN interface and an NDIS interface.

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13. The method of claim 11 wherein the operating system interface is selected from a group comprising at least a PPPoA interface and an RFC 1483 Bridged Ethernet interface.

14. A machine-accessible medium including thereon instructions which, when executed by a machine, cause the machine to perform a method comprising:

    receiving from an operating system of the machine a request to identify a driver;

    prompting a user to identify the driver;

    receiving from the user an identification of a common driver;

    delivering the identification of the common driver to the operating system to satisfy the operating system's request;

    installing the common driver;

    receiving from the user an identification of an operating system interface through which a component is to access the operating system;

    deinstalling the common driver;

    installing a first driver from a plurality of available drivers for the component, the first driver being selected from the plurality in accordance with the identification of the operating system interface.

15. The machine-accessible medium of claim 14 including thereon further instructions which, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to perform the method further comprising:

    preparing a list of data which the user is to collect;

    presenting the list to the user;

    receiving the data from the user; and

    configuring one or more features of the machine in accordance with the data.

16. The machine-accessible medium of claim 14 including thereon further instructions which, when executed by the machine, cause the machine to perform the method further comprising:

    determining whether the operating system is sufficiently complete to enable the operating system interface; and

    if not, further installing the operating system to enable the operating system interface.

17.   The machine-accessible medium of claim 14 wherein the common driver is a do-nothing driver.

18.   The machine-accessible medium of claim 14 wherein the common driver is stored in a root directory of a removable storage device.

19.   A method of satisfying an operating system's request that a user identify a software component to be installed, in the presence of a plurality of possible such software components, the method comprising:

    providing to the operating system an identification of a placeholder software component which is not one of the plurality of possible software components;

    installing the placeholder software component;

    deinstalling the placeholder software component; and

    installing one of the plurality of possible software components.

20.   The method of claim 19 further comprising the deinstalling being done after and in response to:

    prompting the user to gather data; and

    receiving the data from the user.

21.   The method of claim 20 further comprising the installing one of the plurality of possible software components being done after and in response to:

    receiving from the user an identification of one of a plurality of types of interface through which the respective possible software components are able to access the operating system.

22.   The method of claim 21 further comprising:

    decoding the one of the plurality of possible software components prior to its installation.

23.   The method of claim 21 wherein the software components comprise drivers.

24.   The method of claim 23 wherein the drivers comprise DSL drivers.

1 25. The method of claim 23 further comprising:

2 determining whether the operating system is a complete enough install to enable operation of

3 the software component to be installed; and, if not,

4 installing additional elements of the operating system.

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1 26. An apparatus for use with equipment of a first predetermined type, the apparatus comprising:

2 an operating system including a plurality of interfaces to equipment of a corresponding

3 plurality of types, one of which is the first predetermined type, and including a driver ID demander;

4 and

5 a wizard including a common driver which, when identified to the driver ID demander

6 satisfies the driver ID demander's requirement to identify one of the plurality of interfaces.

7 27. The apparatus of claim 26 wherein the common driver comprises a do-nothing driver.

28. The apparatus of claim 26 further comprising:

a driver of the first predetermined type; and

the wizard being adapted to deinstall the common driver upon installation of the driver of the

first predetermined type.

1 29. An apparatus for installation into a device to connect the device to equipment of a first

2 predetermined type, the device including software which includes a plurality of interfaces to

3 equipments of a plurality of types including the first predetermined type and which requests an

4 identification of a driver in response to installation of a device that utilizes one of the plurality of

5 interfaces, the apparatus comprising:

6 a hardware device for providing communication to the equipment;

7 a driver of the first predetermined type;

8 a common driver; and

9 a wizard for installing the common driver in response to the software requesting the

10 identification of the driver, and for deinstalling the common driver and installing the driver of the

11   first predetermined type in response to receiving information identifying the equipment as being of

12   the first predetermined type.

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1   30.   The apparatus of claim 29 wherein the equipment is internet service provider equipment and

2   wherein:

3   the hardware device comprises a DSL card.

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1   31.   The apparatus of claim 30 wherein:

2   the common driver is a do-nothing driver.